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AMERICAN SENSATIONS.

AMERICA, to a greater extent than any other, is a country of sensations. An excitement has a wider range and involves a larger proportion of the entire population. The reason of this may be found in the general equality, and the universal diffusion of intelligence. There are fewer persons raised above the influence of a popular excitement, and there are also fewer who are sunk below it. In no country, perhaps, does the whole population so move together, actuated by one impulse, as in America. Four thousand newspapers and the telegraph have something to do with it. The habit of taking a part in public affairs, of discussing political matters, and voting for public officers, from president to hog-reeve, may have its influence. But there is no doubt about the fact. America is pre-eminently the country of great excitements or sensations. I remember a few of them.

The first of these great popular uprisings within my recollection, was occasioned by the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette, at the invitation of President Monroe, to the land he had generously aided in its struggle for freedom. It was in 1824. At the age of twenty, Lafayette, an enthusiast for liberty, as understood by the disciples of Rousseau, left his young wife, and flew to the aid of Washington. He loaded a ship with the supplies which were most needed by the American rebels of those days, and helped them with the prestige of his name, with his scant military experience, and all the money he could command. He not only drilled his soldiers, but clothed and fed them; and when his own means were exhausted, he appealed to the generosity of others. When the ladies of Baltimore, then, as now, the most beautiful and patriotic in America, proposed to give a ball to the gallant young Frenchman, he said to them: 'Ladies, I should be delighted to dance with you, but my soldiers have no shirts.' The ball was postponed; and the belles of Baltimore made shirts for the rebel soldiers, when North and South were engaged in a common rebellion.

It is no wonder that Lafayette, after an interval of forty years, twelve of which had been passed in an Austrian prison, which, doubtless, prevented his head being cut off under the rule of Marat and Robespierre, was welcomed with enthusiasm in America by the new generation, as well as by the few who had been his youthful comrades in the War of American

Independence. He came to New York in a national ship sent to bring him. He was the nation's guest. A whole nation turned out as one man to welcome him, to honour him, to give him every possible testimonial of respect and gratitude. The world has scarcely ever witnessed such a spectacle. Cannon thundered, banners waved, men shouted, women waved their white handkerchiefs, little girls strewed flowers in his path; cities, and states, and the whole nation shouted 'Welcome, Lafayette!'

The next great sensation was the election of General Jackson as president. He had been a hard Indian fighter in the wars with the Cherokees and Choctaws. He made the successful defence of New Orleans, January 8, 1815, and gained a victory over a portion of the British troops that subsequently fought and conquered at Waterloo; as the Americans say, 'he conquered the conquerors of Waterloo,' which is quite true, only Waterloo came several months afterward. In due time, General Jackson ('Old Hickory'), the 'Hero of New Orleans,' was elected president, after the most violent opposition which had then been known in American politics. He was re-elected, and lived to be the most hated and most respected of American presidents. When he died, full of years and honours, the whole nation buried him as a hero, and those who had cursed him living, shed tears over his corpse.

In these days, we should hardly think of celebrating with general enthusiasm the completion of a canal, unless it were that by which M. Lesseps hopes to unite the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, or that still more important one, which is to connect the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, and which, it is said, was a strong inducement with the Archduke Maximilian in moving him to accept the imperial crown of Mexico, 'in the interests of civilisation.' But I can remember when the completion of the Erie Canal, which connects the River Hudson with Lakes Erie and Ontario—which married the great American lakes to the Atlantic, and made New York the chief seaport of the west—was an immense sensation. Cannon were planted from New York to Oswego and Buffalo, more than five hundred miles, one mile apart along the whole distance; and salutes were fired from all this line of artillery. Bells rang, and orators spouted. It is all forgotten now; and the 'big ditch' is looked at scornfully from the rapid cars of the New York Central Railroad. But the Erie celebration

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was a great affair at the time; and at Albany the orator of the day solemnly married Lake Erie to the Atlantic with what he considered fitting solemnities: the old connection by the Niagara Falls and the St Lawrence being looked upon as irregular and illegitimate, while the canal, with its numerous locks and strong embankments, was considered a more civilised and respectable arrangement.

The reception of Mr Charles Dickens in New York and everywhere in America, when he visited that country some years ago, was a national sensation. I can call to mind nothing like it since the celebrated ovation to Voltaire in Paris. It was an outburst of popular enthusiasm, which extended to every class—if one may speak of classes in a country of freedom and equality—and to almost every individual. Mr Dickens was then immensely popular. His works, which cost the publishers nothing for copyright, had been sold by millions in the cheapest of possible editions. The only difficulty was how to do him fitting honour. Had he been, in any way, a military hero, even a captain of volunteers, every regiment in New York would have turned out to give him a military reception. A public dinner was talked of, but it would not have done at all. Five hundred persons might have dined with the creator of *Pickwick*, but five thousand equally anxious and equally entitled to see and honour him would have been excluded. So, the New Yorkers gave him a ball in the largest theatre that existed at that period—the Park theatre—where the Cooke, Kean, Kemble, and great stars of the British drama had delighted transatlantic audiences. The crush, the enthusiasm, the excitement to see the great author of all the *Wellerisms* that filled the thousands of newspapers, and gave mirth to millions, were overwhelming. No doubt it was a moment of triumph to the author; but under the blooming and fragrant rose was a rude thorn. The Americans, who honoured the author and eagerly read his works, refused to pay for them. Glory, to any amount, they were willing to give, but 'nary cent' of cash. As half a loaf is better than no bread, I think Mr Dickens was wise to take the glory while it was going, and pay off the score of piracy in *American Notes*, and any small balance in *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

The triumphant close of the Mexican war, and the return of General Scott and the New York volunteers from the 'Halls of the Montezumas,' was the occasion of one of the most exciting and intense of American sensations—a drama of actual life, with nations for the actors, and the world for spectators. The volunteers had fought and conquered. They came home with skeleton regiments—and regiments of skeletons. Many had died of disease—many had been killed in battle. The wounded who could walk were in the ranks. Bronzed, meagre, sallow, ragged, with ensigns tattered by the balls of the enemy—with ranks thin, and worn, and ghastly, they marched up the glittering street, the chief avenue of the great city that a few months before had seen them depart with full ranks, and flushed with hope. City and country crowded to welcome them. A long and brilliant escort marched by, and then came the veteran general, his white hairs blowing in the wind, and that little squad of ragged, dirty, gaunt, hollow-eyed spectres, the representatives of what was left of the conquerors of Mexico. The bells rang out their welcome; the women waved their snowy handkerchiefs, then wiped their eyes, and waved them again. The vast crowd pressed upon them, and cheered with swelling throats and dimmed eyes. In that crowd were mothers who welcomed their returning sons; but yet more mothers whose sons would never return. The thinned ranks told the mournful story. Never was a joyous festival more sad and pitiful. It was a march through a storm of hurrahs and tears.

If there is anything of which Americans especially

approve, it is rebellions; and if there is anybody they delight in, it is rebels—provided always that the rebellions and rebels are not their own. Let a rebel or revolutionist from any part of the world visit America, and he may be sure of an enthusiastic reception. Pole, Hungarian, Italian, Irishman—it matters not, so that he is a rebel. The supreme right of revolution, everywhere but in America, is the first article in the political creed of every American. If Nana Sahib had landed in New York, directly after the Indian mutiny, there is no doubt at all that he would have had a magnificent reception. He did not find it convenient to come; but we had a visit from Louis Kossuth. The eloquent Magyar entered New York as a victorious Caesar entered Rome. Defeated, an exile, a refugee, he was, notwithstanding, a hero, and the popular sympathy for rebels against other governments burst out with great intensity. There was a great military procession and popular ovation. There was an immense public dinner at the Astor House, with a wonderful speech from the rebel Hungarian. Then the country, as usual, followed the example of the chief city, and Kossuth made a triumphal tour of the states.

I cannot remember anything in America more characteristic than the celebration of the laying-down of the Atlantic telegraph. True, it was done chiefly by British capital, and it extended from one British island to another; but the Americans were determined to have, to say the least, a full share of the glory of the bold, but as yet unsuccessful enterprise. Professor Morse, an American, had invented the telegraph, and Mr Field, another American, had seen half of it committed to its ocean-bed, where it has ever since lain in profound repose, undisturbed by electric currents, or the prices of corn and cotton. It stammered two or three broken messages, and then for ever after held its peace. But the Americans were wide-awake to the glory of the achievement, and determined upon a national celebration. A hundred cities were illuminated. The fireworks in New York burned off the roof of the City Hall. Tar-barrels blazed, and miles of streets were flooded with light on the shores of Lake Michigan and the banks of the Mississippi. Bells rang, and cannon fired. Mr Field rode up Broadway, with an immense procession through a hurricane of enthusiastic cheers. Who can safely predict the action of a people so excitable, and among whom every excitement takes so wide a range?

The visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to America was an unprecedented, unexpected, bewildering event, that had in it the elements of a great sensation. The Americans were curious to see an English prince, the grandson of George III. They had a genuine respect for his mother. The quiet, gentle, and eminently appropriate bearing of the youthful heir-apparent, under unusual and trying circumstances, was much admired. But what was the real feeling? Friendship to England?—not much. Any special regard for the prince, probably destined, one day, to be the monarch of a great and rival empire?—not the least. There was the simple determination to let him see that he was in a great country—the wish at once to gratify their own pride of country, and to dazzle and astonish their guest. Probably such motives are common enough wherever people entertain other people; but this spirit of ostentation and glorification was, in this case, stimulated to its highest pitch. The universal expression was: 'We bear no malice; we can afford to be generous; look at our magnificent country—see our splendid cities—admire our institutions. You have come, at last, where you can learn something that may be useful to you; you have shewn your sense in paying us a visit, and we will shew you something that will pay you for coming.'

The outbreak of the civil war in America was to the last degree sensational. A week before it began,

I am sure that three-fourths—probably a larger proportion of the northern people—would have voted for peace. The Southern States had seceded months before, and still there was no sign of war. Northern statesmen, almost without exception, had declared for peace. The eyes of the whole nation were turned on Fort Sumter. One day a fleet of United States' vessels appeared off the bar of Charleston, and the first gun was fired upon the fortress. In one day, the whole North declared for war. The peace men were overborne; and henceforth there was nothing heard of but vengeance, subjugation, and, if need be, extermination and annihilation, for the rebels who had dared to fire upon the American flag. Sensations have followed each other thick and fast, from the rout of Bull Run to the siege of Charleston. The whole war has been, for the North, a series of sensations. Money has grown more and more plentiful; the tide of prosperity has swollen higher and higher; wealth and luxury fill every northern city; and the war itself, in defeat or in victory, is a magnificent drama, and a great sensation.

EARLY ADVERTISEMENTS.

BEING busy at some work which lay in the times of William III., I had occasion to look over many files of old newspapers which once came wet and fresh from the press into the hands of his subjects. Some of them, indeed, were read mainly by Englishmen who were very unwilling to confess themselves his subjects; for they were edited by non-jurors, and bought by Jacobites. In what coffee-house (I asked myself), if in any, used these newspapers to lie? For the coffee-houses of London were then the great marts of news; to them, all the quidnuncs, as well as all the wits, resorted. In their loud talkings, the pamphleteers found the gauge of public opinion. New serials were eager for the coffee-houses' support; and but for them, many interesting but ephemeral publications would by this time have altogether perished. The names of London coffee-houses are written hastily and roughly on many a pamphlet, essay, and poem now safely bound up in the Museum library, and ready for whoever may need it.

I propose to put before the reader a few specimens of the advertisements set forward in William's day to catch our ancestors' purses, or to supply their wants. In each paper, indeed, like the news, they are sparse enough. Even the *Public Advertiser*, which consist of nothing but advertisements, do not in all their pages together contain as much as one column of to-day's *Times*. Public printed advertisements had begun within the memory of living men. The *Quarterly Review*, in a well-known article (June 1855) cites an advertisement of 'Irenodia Gratulatoria,' a panegyric on Cromwell, as the earliest 'probably' of English advertisements. This was published in the *Parliamentary Mercury (M. Politicus)* for January 1652. I have since found a few earlier advertisements, the earliest of all being an inquiry, with reward promised, after a lost 'piebald nag'; it occurs in *The Moderate* for March 27, 1649. The advertiser's name is 'John Rotherham, of Barnet, in Hertfordshire'—an important man in the history of English advertising.

The earliest advertisements were nearly always for lost animals, for book-buyers, for persons seeking situations, or having situations to offer. The first food-advertisements were from tea and chocolate merchants. Carriers advertised a great deal. Lastly, quack-medicine proprietors made use of the public papers; and until the middle of the last century, they took up, perhaps, the largest portion of the advertisement sheets.

Throughout the Commonwealth, and the earlier years of Charles II.'s reign, lost and stolen horses are the animals most inquired after by the news-

papers. But towards the end of his reign, we are reminded of a well-known characteristic of the Stuart family—their love for dogs. 'Was there ever a Stuart painted without a dog being put into the picture?' asked a traveller in the Historic Portrait Gallery at Fredericksberg, which is rich in Stuart portraits—the Danish and English families being then related, through the marriage of James I. and Anne of Denmark. We are reminded of this dog-love on looking over files of the *London Gazette* of the later years of Charles II. In the first number for 1682, there are no less than three rewards for lost dogs—'spaniels,' and 'little shock dogs.' The offered rewards vary from ten shillings to twenty. These advertisements continue throughout the year. The lost dog is sometimes stated to be the property of his majesty. The reader will remember the picture of the king in *Peveril of the Peak*, attended by his six or seven little curly-haired spaniels, 'whose gambols seemed to afford him much amusement.' Charles's ladies seem also to have shared in this dog-love of their sultan and master, and to have suffered also occasionally from the like loss or theft of their canine pets. In No. 1841 of the *London Gazette* (July 9th to 12th, 1683), 'her Grace the Duchess of Portsmouth' advertises an offer of two guineas for the recovery of 'a young little black bitch.' The finder is requested to 'bring her to the porter at Whitehall Gate.' This dog-fancying descended apparently to the Stuarts of illegitimate birth. In 1682, the *Gazette* advertises 'a black, grisly dog, cropped ear, bobed [sic] tail,' which 'belongs to' the affable, generous, and handsome 'Duke of Monmouth.' On turning over the *Gazette* for the very next year, I find a proclamation for the apprehending of the Duke himself.

A very few advertisements of quack medicines occur in the later years of Charles II.; the first I have found is Mrs Claudia Faber's *Aurum Potabile*. 'The price is five shillings.' 'It is to be had at Mr Cheyne's house, near Paul's Wharf.'

In noticing lost animals as a subject of early advertising, I by no means forgot that *man* is an animal; lost negroes are occasionally inquired for. See this, from the 1867th number of the *Gazette* (October 15, 1683): 'A negro boy, about seventeen years of age, whose name is Zebulon, for shortness, Zeb. In canvas clothes, a fur cap, black stockings, plain-soled shoes. Run away from Christopher Newham in Love Lane, near the old Glass-house in Ratcliff, the 3d of October. Whoever gives notice of the said negro, so as he may be restored again to his master aforesaid, or to John Brighurst, bookseller in Gracechurch Street, shall have a guinea reward.'

Skipping over the troublesome years of Charles's brother, we come now to the post-revolution advertisements. The reign of William III. was marked, amongst other signs of a new epoch, by the noticeable one of a great and gradual increasing of the newspapers. The parties of British politics began to acknowledge that the press, and not the sword, was in future to be the weapon of English civil war. British merchants and shopkeepers discovered that the newspaper might do much of the work of the exchange, the fair, and the market. Still, in the years through which I have just been looking, advertisements take up, on the whole, a small portion of the journals. They are not only few in number, but are printed in a larger type, and with greater show and pretence than a modern daily newspaper can spare them.

Every Friday was published *A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*. It was the *Economist* of the Williamite period. In 1695, April 12, it had reached its one hundred and forty-first number, in which number an advertiser says: 'I want a negro-man that is a good house-carpenter or a good shoemaker.' One wonders how it is that the required servant might possess either the one or the other of such very different trades. Did the

advertiser himself practise both? If we read such an advertisement now, we might conclude that he was an emigration agent. The use of the first person strikes us as quaint and old. It was the custom of the time. In No. 153 (July 5, 1695), there is a still quainter example. 'I know a gentlewoman, whose family is only her husband, herself, and maid; and [she] would, to keep her company, take care of a child, or two, or three, of three years old and upwards. *She is my good friend*, and such a one, that whosoever shall put their children to her, I am sure will give me thanks, and think themselves happy, let them be of what rank they will.'

In the same newspaper, August 7, the following year, we come across an educational advertisement: 'About forty miles from London is a schoolmaster, has had such success with boys, as there are almost forty ministers and schoolmasters that were his scholars.' A school for young ladies is kept under the same roof: 'His wife also teaches girls lace-making, plain work, raising paste, sauces, and cookery to the degree of exactness.' This would be a very courageous announcement for any present-day school-mistress to put forth. The reader will remember, however, that at the end of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century, it was not thought necessary that ladies should know much of books. Plays, and the very short stories then called novels, were their chief reading on the week-day, and the *Lady's Calling*, or some similar volume, on the Sunday. I say 'ladies,' although the advertiser says 'girls,' for we may conclude that the female half of his establishment did not come from a lower sphere than the male half. As his successful boy-pupils became clergymen and schoolmasters, his successful girl-pupils perhaps became clergymen's wives and schoolmasters' wives. In the next paragraph of the advertisement, we find his terms, which the reader will think too cheap, unless he calls to mind the greater value of a pound in all purchases at that day: 'His price is £10 or £11 the year, with a pair of sheets and spoon, to be restored if desired.' I had no notion that this last requirement was so venerably ancient. There is something very naive in the optional restitution; it is almost a hint that the parents ought not to be shabby enough to ask for the old sheets and battered spoon. The advertisement is addressed chiefly to London society. 'Coaches and other conveniences pass every day within half a mile of the house, and 'tis but an easy day's journey to or from London.' From the special character of the newspaper in which this old schoolmaster advertises, we may conclude that the sons and daughters of London merchants and well-to-do shopkeepers were his usual scholars.

Quack advertisements increased, like the 'Hanoverian rats,' after the arrival of William. In all ages, they are superlative and extraordinary, so there is little need to give examples of them in the end of the seventeenth century. A Mr Salmon, 'at the great house by Blackfriars Stairs,' tells the people in the *Postman* for December 14, 1697, that all the poor 'may repair to him,' for he gives 'advice gratis, and all sorts of proper medicaments for their diseases, without money and without price, as formerly.' In the number for August 26, Mr William Bindless's (citizen and chirurgeon) Old Pill and several others are advertised by his daughter. 'The reason of publishing is,' she says, 'that one John Gadson pretends to make it, which never knew one thing in it. You may be furnished with it of her own making at Mrs Voseer's in Whitefryers, a chandler's shop.'

Travelling advertisements are not unfrequent. They give us insight into the time taken by the coaches—if not stopped by highwaymen, floods, or impassableness of roads. We may now travel to Nottingham in three hours and a half. 'The Mansfield and Nottingham Flying Stage-coaches,' which

set out from the Ram in Smithfield every Monday and Tuesday, in the year 1699, took exactly as many days. This was considered rapid travelling; Charles Hood, another coach-proprietor, advertises in the *Post-boy* for June 6, 1699, that he will take persons to Nottingham 'for 23s. apiece, until the 21st of August.' When the autumn rains and shorter days made the journey more perilous, the price, we suppose, was increased; or, sometimes, the coaches did not run at all.

I pass now to the advertisements of amusements. Theatre-bills have been well ingrafted into such full books as Genoete's long *History of the Stage*, so I need say little about the names of the plays or the actors then popular. There were in different parts of London rival 'Tussauds,' which cried up their own exhibitions, and depreciated all similar ones. The *Postman* for February 6, 1696, contains the following puff: 'Whereas it hath been reported that some of the excellent figures in the Royal Court, in the Great Room over Durham Yard, in the Exchange in the Strand [five circles, one within another], have been removed to several parts of the town, these are to give notice that none of them have, or shall be removed, whatever pretence may be made. In the place above-named, you may see King Charles II. [they were perhaps afraid of shewing King James II.], King William, Queen Mary of blessed memory, the Princess [afterwards Queen Anne], the Duchess of Norfolk walking, the Duke of Gloster, the Duke of Monmouth, a lady of honour, the king's page, and several other curious figures in a stately temple. You will likewise see Oliver Cromwell in his full stature, the muscles, sinews, and veins appearing all over his body, so naturally, that you would take it for life itself did it not want motion. Made by Mrs Mills, the greatest artist in Europe.'

The opposition exhibition, advertised in the *Postman* for August 26, 1697, was probably connected with the unkind calumny which gave rise to the previous advertisement. The latter advertisement makes an exclusive claim as the former. 'The effigies of her late majesty Queen Mary of blessed memory is curiously done to the life in wax, dressed in coronation robes, with so majestic a mien, that nothing seems wanting but life and motion, as persons of great honour have, upon the strictest view, with surprise declared. So that, without boasting, it may truly be affirmed far to exceed all that has been made of this kind. Likewise the effigies of several persons of quality; with a fine banquet, and a number of other curiosities in every room passing to and fro the queen's apartment. All to be seen every day at Mr Goldsmith's in Green Court, in the Old Jury, London, and nowhere else in England.'

The excursions of our railway companies, van-proprietors, and steam-packet companies had their equivalent for all weary of London bricks and mortar in the reign of William. This curious advertisement of an excursion-party is from the *Flying Post* for April 22, 1699: 'These may certify all my loving masters and ladies; that on Wednesday next, being the 26th of this instant, April 1699, at Dame Butterfield's, at Mobs-hole, in the parish of Wanstead, in Essex, within a mile of the Green Man, will be a house-warming, where all my loving friends shall be kindly entertained with a calf, roasted whole, and a ditch of bacon, roasted whole, and other varieties. With music. And also, being an old hunter, I shall accommodate you with six brass horns, sounding the delightful harmony of hunting. So, hoping my loving masters and ladies, friends and acquaintances, will be pleased to honour me with their good company, at the time and place aforesaid, and, as I am in duty bound, shall ever return you thanks, and remain yours obliged to serve you. SUSANA BUTTERFIELD.'

The advertisements of amusing literature are not unfrequent. 'Richard Ellison, at the Eagle and Child,

in the Pall Mall, where gentlemen and ladies may pick novels at 6s. per dozen stitched.'—*Flying Post*, April 27, 1699. The reader may probably not be aware that the earliest novels were short stories, mostly printed in duodecimo, and containing from sixty to a hundred pages; some were of even less length. Many of them were of a most abominable character. I believe that the earliest volume novels were the twelve-volume collection published, if I remember rightly, in the time of William's successor. In this series, each volume contains a number of novels; the *Boccaccio* stories, and the slighter works of Cervantes and lesser Spanish writers, formed the models upon which they were written. They appear to have been cheaper than plays, and to have been bought by wholesale. 'All gentlemen, ladies, and others may be furnished with most sort of plays at 9s. per dozen, and novels at 5s. per dozen, by B. Lintott, at the Cross Keys, in St Martin's Lane, near Long Acre End.'—*Flying Post*, June 6, 1699.

Advertisements of lotteries occur in nearly every newspaper of this date, and they continue throughout the eighteenth century, having ceased only within the memory of persons now living. I give one which is interesting from the great names connected with it. In the *Postman* for November 16, 1695, the people are invited to speculate in the Epsom Lottery. It is described as 'The New Adventure for £60,000 sterling, which money will be deposited in the Bank of England.' They need have no doubts; they are told that it 'goes on very successfully.' It is not a swindle; great names are responsible for it; we of this day still acknowledge them as such—one is the greatest of English architects, the man who has given London the most known and noticeable of its features; the other, the greatest English painter of that age. 'The trustees who have given their hands to see the fair ordering and management of this adventure, are Sir Christopher Wren, Sir Godfrey Kneller, &c.' Some of these lotteries had very enticing titles; there is 'An Adventure called A General Relief for a General Loss'; and another, 'An Adventure called Three Blanks to a Prize.' Both are advertised in the newspapers of the year 1695.

RUTH MORRISON.
IN FOUR PARTS.

PART I.—CHAPTER I.

'God bless you, dearest!' The low, earnest voice that uttered these words was the only voice on earth that would now speak, in tender or loving tones, to the desolate orphan girl. Almost as the farewell was uttered, the coach in which Ruth Morrison sat, its sole occupant, and for that she was thankful, drove off from the Imperial Hotel, Sackville Street, Dublin, upon its northern route. The young man who had bidden her adieu stood with folded arms and dimmed eyes watching the vehicle, the Belfast day-coach, until it was quite lost to view. The streets at that early hour of a cold November morning were nearly deserted, the lamps were being rapidly extinguished, though it was still dusk, while the bitter freezing wind that swept by portended severe weather.

'My poor little darling!' exclaimed he who was left behind, as he looked up to the leaden sky, from which already one or two flakes of snow were dropping—'what a terrible day I fear you will have for your sad journey!'

Ferdinand Munroe and Ruth Morrison had been neighbours' children, living in the County Kildare; the fact of both their families having been originally from Scotland, drew them more together, and companions from early youth, they became deeply

attached; first, with the often evanescent love of childhood, yet afterwards with the stronger passion of riper years. But, as in the old adage, 'The course of true love never did run smooth'; sorrow and disaster seemed to settle down upon both their homesteads, until, at the time of which we are speaking, they were alike orphans in the fullest sense of the word; each, too, similarly circumstanced, in having an uncle as almost their only near relative. Ferdinand's uncle had aided the young man to the utmost of his power, and he was now, chiefly through his instrumentality, successfully prosecuting his studies as an engineer. Ruth's uncle offered her, it is true, an asylum at his house, on her mother's death, but in so cold a manner, that she rightly preferred independence, and was, this very morning that we write of, setting out to fill the situation of governess in the family of a Captain Sinclair, who lived some miles beyond Newry. She had been stopping with a friend in Belfast some few days, at whose house Ferdinand had often met her, and had stipulated that he was to be her escort to the coach, and to see her off upon her journey.

'Please God, dearest, it shall not be long; I'll soon be working in my profession, and we shall have enough to begin the world together.' Such were some of his last words to his betrothed, and with little of hope or prospect as they were fraught, they served in some degree to cheer the heart of the poor lonely traveller. Cold and dreary the day proved. Long ere the coach reached Drogheda, where they remained a short time for breakfast, the snow was falling thickly; and when late in the day it ceased, it was followed by a severe frost. Ruth, chilled and weary, had fallen into a doze soon after they left Newry, and was roused by their again stopping to change horses at a wayside inn, when she heard a deep rough voice calling out to the coachman: 'Is there one Miss Morrison with you in the coach?'

'Yes,' cried Ruth; 'I'm here.'

'A car for you, miss, from the captain's.'

Ruth with difficulty alighted, so cramped and frozen had she become: a hurried, confused search for her luggage, the accustomed gratuities to guard and coachman, a blast of the horn, and off went the vehicle, leaving her standing, in the dusk, on the road, shivering with cold, and sinking in the crisp snow nearly up to her ankles. As well as she could descry in the dim light, it seemed a coarse, common kind of stable-boy who had been sent for her, with an equally common-looking hack-car. Brought up as a lady, with delicacy and care all her life, this careless indifference as to comfort or propriety jarred painfully on her feelings. 'Perhaps,' she thought, 'I am expecting too much; things will be different now;' and she climbed up the side of the car as well as her chilled, stiffened limbs would permit. The night was fine, and comparatively clear, both from the mass of brilliant stars that thronged the heavens, and from the glare of the snow with which the entire country was mantled. The drive, though really but a very few miles in length, seemed interminable: their progress was necessarily slow, from the state of the roads; and once, when labouring up a steep hill, her good-natured companion insisted on wrapping a coat of his own round her feet. He volunteered, too, some scraps of information about her future home, not altogether uninteresting to Ruth, though encouraged in his communications by but an

occasional monosyllabic reply. She gathered that, as the lad expressed it, 'the captain was most-ways from home'; that 'missis was very sickly entirely'; that 'they didn't see much of her'; 'but,' said he, 'did ye ever hear tell, miss, of missis's own woman—her that come, they say, from Ingee with her?' and when Ruth replied 'No,' and asked who she was: 'She's Mrs Montserrat, they call her,' rejoined the youth; 'and I'll tell ye what, miss,' he added, cracking his whip, 'she's—my eye!'—and he gave a long low whistle—'she's just that!'

What this ambiguous description might imply, Ruth was at a loss to imagine, nor did the further explanation her informant annexed, convey any more definite idea, as he added in a lower tone, as if imparting some intelligence: 'We calls her, down stairs, Thunder and Lightning.' He also informed Ruth that the two young ladies were 'nate little craythurs.' About them, indeed, Ruth would have been disposed to make inquiries, if about any as, being her future charge, she felt naturally special interest in the topic. At length the cold and weary journey drew to its close, and when, stopping for a large gateway to be opened, and passing up a long avenue, the driver announced: 'Now, miss, we're here; this be Oaklands; yon is the house, and down there is the lake and the grove,' Ruth felt her heart beat quickly with the indescribable nervous shrinking sensation that is felt by the timid and inexperienced when first coming among strangers, and that is ever enhanced when the position is that of a dependent, and the reception or future treatment uncertain. The entrance to the residence at Oaklands was at the side; there was a kind of verandah or covered passage running along from the door to the end of the house, and there Ruth and the driver of the car stood for several moments after the first application for admittance, which consisted of two loud knocks by the latter like a postman's rap. When this failed, he tried the bell, and rang it so violently, that they could hear its peal resounding through the lower parts of the house. Immediately afterwards, there was the noise of doors slamming, and then a quick tread along a hall, and the door was opened by a man with a candle in his hand. Before he had done so, the carman had whispered to Ruth: 'This be Mr Marks—Joshua Marks, the butler; I know his wark.'

'Oh, is that you, Patsey?' exclaimed the man, shading the light which he held with his hand. 'How late you are!'

'Not so aisy, Mistrer Marks, to come quick along slippery roads. Be gorrta! we went back a'most two steps for every one we come forrad, and the coach was late too.'

'Will you please come in, miss?' said the butler to Ruth, and she stepped within a narrow hall or passage into her new—Home; if she might be able, in any sense, to call it by that loved but often sorrowful name?

'Here, Patsey, will you lend a hand?' cried the butler in a sharp tone, as the boy was laying down Ruth's luggage on the door-step. 'Bring it in here.' And he lifted one end of the large box himself. When the things were all in, the man closed and barred the outer door, and giving a half-curious, half-contemptuous look at poor Ruth, who stood trembling alike from cold as from nervousness—'Follow me, miss, if you please,' he said, and they passed into a square inner hall, lit by a lamp from the ceiling, and into which five or six doors opened, which were then all closed. The butler stood for a moment, as if in doubt what next to do. 'If you please,' said he at last, 'wait here, and I'll send some one to you.'

For nearly ten minutes, Ruth stood alone in the hall. All was silent around her, saving the tick of the clock that stood at one corner. She was beginning to wonder who would next appear, or if any one would come at all, when the door through which the

servant had gone was again opened, and a female entered. She was tall and slight, apparently about thirty-five years of age, pale, with thin lips, and an exceedingly unpleasant expression of countenance; her eyes were dark and piercing, though, as Ruth afterwards found, she rarely looked straight at the person whom she was addressing. Now, as she advanced towards the young girl, her gaze for an instant was painfully penetrating; then she dropped the lids, and eyed Ruth only with a furtive, stealthy glance, that made her feel very uncomfortable.

'Mademoiselle—Miss Morrison, that is, I mean—I suppose.'

'Yes,' replied Ruth, bowing slightly. She was, for an instant, at a loss to know whether this was her future mistress, or the person whom Patsey, the driver, had denominated 'Thunder and Lightning.' She was wrapped up in a large loose shawl, that might have been worn either from delicacy of health or the bitterness of the evening; her accent (though she uttered each word in distinct English) implied the foreigner; so did her appearance. But her next sentence cleared up the momentary doubt as to who she was.

'Madame,' she continued, 'is very poorly—very delicate; but she bade me tell you that she will see you by and by.' Ruth bowed. The speaker then made a move towards one of the other doors, but stopped as she was turning the handle. 'Yes,' she exclaimed, as if to herself, 'twill be better—I think,' then, addressing Ruth, she added, 'you had best come to your own room; I'll shew you the way. But stay, where are your things?' Ruth explained that they were in the outer hall.

'Oh, then, I'll have them sent up; come with me.'

Ruth experienced, she could not tell why, a decided repugnance to her companion. She at the same time felt that the woman viewed her with dislike, and might very soon become a dangerous associate.

'My name, I may as well tell you,' she said, addressing Ruth as they came to the first landing, 'is Montserrat—Mrs Montserrat; I am housekeeper here, and companion to Madame, and have been with her for many years.'

'Indeed,' was the reply. Ruth did not care to tell her that she had learned her name before.

'Yes,' she continued, as they ascended the stairs, '*your mistress*,' and she laid an emphasis on the word that made Ruth wince at the marked implication. 'Your mistress is in broken health; she has never been the same since the birth of her little girl in India, and I have now to manage everything for her. Captain Sinclair, poor man'—and she shrugged her shoulders, half contemptuously—'is so much away on his business, that we see little of him.'

'I thought,' rejoined Ruth, 'that there were two little girls—that I was to have the charge of two; you speak but of one.'

'Oh, did you not know?' returned the housekeeper. 'Gertrude—Mademoiselle Gertrude is Madame's child, while Alice is only the captain's niece; and very different children they are.—But here are your rooms,' exclaimed Mrs Montserrat, throwing open a door. 'Mon Dieu! only see—*bête! stupide!*—a fire that would roast an elephant!' And the housekeeper pulled the bell angrily. 'That fool Bridget!' she continued; 'no getting her to do as she is told.'

It was, no doubt, a large fire that burned in the grate, and that sent its bright warm glow all over the small neat room, but not too large nor hot, Ruth thought, for so severe a night. For the first time, a feeling like comfort and hope crept into her disconsolate heart, as she beheld the pleasant look of this little sitting-room, that, as she gathered, was to be her own; the bedroom, still smaller, opened into it, and she was considerably relieved to find that she would be alone, as she had some apprehension that possibly

she might have been obliged to share her sleeping-apartment with her pupils.

When Bridget appeared in answer to the bell, a sharp war of words ensued between her and Mrs Montserrat, to which Ruth was necessarily a listener. She saw plainly that this servant, at least, disliked and resented the woman's authority, while it was equally manifest that the housekeeper was most tyrannical in the exercise of whatever power was vested in her. That first evening of their acquaintance, Ruth observed that, when the housekeeper introduced, as she sometimes did, a French word or expression into her conversation, it seemed involuntary, except when she was irritated or excited, and that then the patois broke out with all the volubility of an under-educated person. More than once, too, she fancied that she disliked its being known that she was a foreigner, or that she should be thought one at all. Mrs Montserrat withdrew after her battle with Bridget, ordering her to have Miss Morrison's luggage brought up, and telling the latter that she would come for her whenever Madame was ready to see her.

When the housemaid returned, bringing up Ruth's packages, first carefully seeing that the coast was clear, she burst into the bitterest invectives against Mrs Montserrat. 'There's no standing the place with that woman,' she exclaimed. 'Tell you what, miss, you're a stranger in the house here; if you let that one get a hand over you, mind I tell you, miss, you'll not be able to stay at all. She and Mister Marks—mister, indeed!' ejaculated the damsel parenthetically, 'as if he were any better than Patsy Donovan or Corbett the coachman, and should be nothing more nor less, we all know, but plain Jushua—the two of them are to rule us all, indeed! And there's missis, she minds nothing but what that one tells her; she can twist her round her little finger, she can. I wishes, the Lord knows, she were back in the Ingees, or in a hotter place—that would be the fittest for her!'

Ruth mildly expostulated with the angry servant; and by her gentleness of tone and manner, succeeded in soothing her perturbed spirit. The girl remained for some time, assisting in the unpacking of Ruth's trunk and the arrangement of the rooms; and the ladylike kindness of the governess so won upon the domestic, that it was agreeable to the former to find that in that strange household she had already gained the good-will of one at least, however humble, as was manifest from the warm yet respectful manner of her attendant. When the housemaid left her, Ruth remained alone and undisturbed for nearly an hour. She heard the house-clock strike eight; she had not tasted food for some hours, indeed but light refreshment at all during the day, and she began to feel the physical exhaustion attendant upon long abstinence, that at first was unnoticed from nervousness and mental agitation. 'Surely,' she thought, 'it is strange that they should leave me so long without food;' and then recollections of bygone times came up, with all the old care and watchful love that had tended her young life, when she never knew a want—all now gone, buried in the village churchyard, beside her childhood's home. Standing by the fire, with her head on her hand, leaning upon the mantel-piece, she fell into a reverie so sad and so absorbing, that she did not at first detect a low knock at the door, until it was repeated more loudly. Starting up, she cried: 'Who's there? Come in.' There was no answer. She accordingly moved forwards, and opened the door. A little girl, dressed in white, apparently about ten years of age, was standing outside: her cheek was flushed, and she was shyly looking down, and moving her foot about nervously, as Ruth stood before her. 'Well, my dear,' said Ruth gently, 'are you Miss Sinclair?'

'No; I'm Alice Sinclair,' whispered the child. 'Aunt wants you; she sent me for you.'

'Well, come, take me to her, will you?' and she took the little girl's hand.

The governess and her young charge crossed the lobby, went up another short flight of stairs, when the child stopped at a door: 'Here it is; here's aunt's room—her,' and she hesitated an instant, as if in doubt how to say the next word—'her boudoir, Marguerite calls it.'

Ruth knocked gently, and passed in with Alice, in answer to the summons to enter. The room in which Ruth now found herself was spacious and handsomely furnished; but her attention was centered upon the figure of Mrs Sinclair, who was reclining on a sofa, at a little distance from the fire. She had a cloak, lined with fur, wrapped round her; her face was strikingly handsome, and did not betoken the delicacy that Ruth had anticipated from what she had heard; her eyes were large and dark, and served to set off a complexion naturally pale and clear, but tinged with the dark hue that residence in an Indian clime imparts. Mrs Montserrat was standing behind the sofa, with her arms folded, and cast upon Ruth, as she entered, the quick furtive glance she had before seen and recoiled from. Near her, another little girl was standing, who, Ruth concluded, was Gertrude Sinclair, her employers' own child. Alice, withdrawing her hand from her governess, as they came into the room, took up her place at the head of her aunt's sofa. Ruth bowed respectfully to the lady, and remained standing in the middle of the room. Mrs Sinclair looked at her steadily from head to foot, returning the salutation with a scarcely perceptible movement of the head. 'Well, Miss Morrison, you are younger-looking than I was led to expect,' she said, in a voice that seemed feeble, it might have been from sickness, or possibly from indolence.

'I mentioned to you, ma'am, as you may remember, in our correspondence, that I was twenty my last place.'

'Well, yes; I do remember.'

There was another awkward pause, during which Mrs Sinclair closed her eyes, as if exhausted by her exertions. Alice slipped forward, and gently moved a chair towards the stranger. The little thoughtful act of politeness from one so young—that might have been a reproof to her seniors—was sweet to Ruth, who thanked her with a smile; but Mrs Montserrat, frowning, told the child to keep quiet—a direction that was at once peevishly echoed from the sofa, with: 'Do be still, child, and don't keep drumming that way, and shaking me all over; and the voice of the invalid was marvellously stronger when raised in the sharp key. The child's hint, however, was not lost, for Mrs Sinclair immediately asked Ruth to be seated.

Ruth Morrison, though bashful and timid naturally, had about her a great deal of quiet dignity, that almost, without a word, repelled anything bordering on the slightest insult. In face and appearance, she was not at all handsome or striking; her figure was too short and set; her features, taken singly, plain; yet there was an animated intelligence in her expression that not only redeemed it from being commonplace, but to most observers gave a singular charm, far beyond what actual beauty conveys. Just now, indeed, she appeared to disadvantage, wearied in body from her long journey, and want of food, and so utterly dispirited, that she was well aware the least thing would overthrow the balance, and betray an emotion that might no longer be controlled. She sat down, however, quietly, in the seat that little Alice had moved to her, and waited without speaking for Mrs Sinclair again to address her. 'I forgot, Marguerite,' said that lady, turning to Mrs Montserrat, in a low tone, 'what's this we were settling about?' The housekeeper bent over the back of the sofa, and whispered something in French to her mistress; the only word that Ruth

caught was *noir*. 'Ah, *oui*,' she replied; but before she had time to say anything, Mrs Montserrat again bent down, and spoke a few words more, but still in an inaudible voice. Mrs Sinclair nodded, and after a moment's pause, addressing Ruth, said: 'Mrs Montserrat will tell you all my wishes and requirements about these young ladies; but every day that I am equal to it, I shall expect you to give them their music-lessons here. Perhaps, Miss Morrison,' she added, 'you would just let me hear you play a little,' pointing to a piano at the other end of the room; 'music I'm most particular about, and I flatter myself that I'm a judge.'

Ruth's education was, for her age, good in every respect, and in music she was specially a proficient; yet at this moment she felt so exhausted and unstrung, that she knew her performance could not be successful. 'I shall, of course, ma'am, comply with your wish,' she answered; 'but I must ask you to judge leniently of me to-night, as I am very tired, and not likely to do justice to your instrument.' As there was no sign of yielding in the matter, Ruth played two or three simple pieces, and better than she had anticipated, for the superior character of the instrument acted as a stimulus; even her exacting listener seemed satisfied, and approved of her style.

'I observe, Miss Morrison,' again began Mrs Sinclair, 'that you are in black. I have a particular dislike to anything gloomy about myself or the children; I expect, therefore, that you will conform to the circumstances of this house, and put off your mourning.'

Ruth rose quickly from the seat which she had resumed after her musical effort. Had it not been for the angry emotions this unfeeling requirement evoked, she would have given way to tears; as it was, her low, sweet voice trembled as she answered: 'Pardon me, Mrs Sinclair—my mother,' and a pause for an instant ensued; but with a strong effort, swallowing down her choking sensation, she continued: 'My mother is but three months dead, my father scarcely a year'—her voice again grew firm—'and I should rather leave your house to-morrow than comply with a request so wounding to my own feelings, and so disrespectful to their memories.'

'Oh, well,' returned Mrs Sinclair hesitatingly, as she looked toward Mrs Montserrat, 'I sha'n't press the matter, as you think so much of it. That will do,' she continued. 'You have dined, I suppose?'

'No,' returned Ruth; 'but I don't mind.'

'Not dined! Marguerite, why did you not order dinner for Miss Morrison. Let her have something to eat immediately.' The housekeeper frowned, and was brushing past Ruth out of the room, when Mrs Sinclair added: 'You won't mind, I suppose, my calling you Morrison; I can't make differences with persons in this establishment.' A bow was the only answer Ruth could give. Mrs Montserrat, as she passed her on the stairs, giving her another scornful look, said sharply: 'I'll send you up some refreshment by the servant.'

Weak as she felt, it was little that Ruth could take; her heart was too full, and her prospects of comfort in this her first situation too gloomy. Before lying down, she opened the window-shutters of her little sitting-room. The night was beautifully calm and bright; a late moon had risen, the stars were countless, and the snow sparkled dazzlingly beneath the frost that had bound it. Not far from the house, the waters of a small lake gleamed like silver through the naked branches of the trees that fringed its margin. The still scene without breathed something of rest upon the unquiet spirit of its watcher; and its wintry aspect was in unison with her own sad meditations. Soon she wandered off in musings to the last home of her people, the place where her father and her mother were sleeping, side by side—its green mounds clad at this moment, she thought, in the pure white covering that met her eye all round—

until the anguish of memory became insupportable; and like one of old, bereft of a parent's blessing, her very soul, if not her voice, went out 'in a great and exceeding bitter cry.' Exhausted by suppressed weeping, she threw herself on her bed, and sank at length into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER II.

It was a rougher voice than used to rouse poor Ruth Morrison in the old mornings at home, that called her from her slumbers the day after her arrival at Oaklands. When she opened her eyes, she could not remember where she was. A female figure holding a lighted candle was standing at the bedroom window, the shutters of which she had just opened: the light from without was cold and gray, that of the early winter morning, and contrasted dimly with the candle-light.

'Oh, you're awake,' said the voice; and by degrees Ruth began to recollect where she was, and recognised Mrs Montserrat as the speaker. 'We're early people in this house—at least I am,' she continued; 'and I generally wake up the other servants; so I came first to you. I suppose you'll have light enough to dress without this,' pointing to the candle; 'and by the time I think you're ready, I'll be back, and give you your instructions.' So saying, and without waiting for any response, she left the room.

With a bitter feeling, that served to mitigate for the time the depressing sensation of loneliness that would otherwise have been paramount, Ruth rose from her couch, and proceeded to dress by the dim morning twilight. 'If,' she thought, 'this woman be permitted to act towards me as she seems inclined, I'll not stay here a week. What business had she intruding into my room at this hour of the morning? I'll soon find out whether this is with Mrs Sinclair's knowledge, or by her permission. Other servants, indeed! I'll let her know that I'll not be treated as a servant by her.' These and such thoughts found audible utterance from the irritated girl, as she moved about through the room in the necessary arrangements of her toilet. When it was completed, she passed out into the sitting-room, to await Mrs Montserrat's return. The morning, like the preceding evening, was intensely cold; the windows were so coated with ice that it was impossible to see out; and as no fire had yet been kindled in the apartment, Ruth began to walk quickly up and down, as well to keep up vitality in her chilled frame, as to endeavour to allay the feelings of vexation that she was just then a prey to. She determined in her own mind that she would bear as far as possible any indignity, and wait patiently, for a while at least, until she could better understand her position, and then, by the tactics pursued, shape her own course. But this prudent resolve was almost instantly defeated, as Mrs Montserrat returned, for, on abruptly entering the room, 'Oh, Morrison,' she exclaimed, 'are you ready?'

This insolent address, enhanced by the tone in which it was uttered, was like the dropping of a spark on inflammable tinder; yet, though boiling with indignation, a sense of her own dignity happily came to her aid; and it was in a comparatively calm voice that Ruth replied: 'Excuse me for one moment, Mrs Montserrat: I quite understand your position in this house; may I request that you will take care to remember mine. I am not a servant here, in the ordinary sense. In whatever terms Mrs Sinclair may choose to address me, I sha'n't dispute the matter, so long as I remain in her employment; but I'll not permit you to speak to me as you have just now done: it may be better for us both to have this explanation at the outset. And now, if you please, I'll be happy to receive from you whatever directions your mistress may have ordered you to convey to me.'

The look that the housekeeper cast upon the speaker was like a flash of lightning from the dark cloud, and gave peculiar meaning to the sobriquet by which Ruth had heard she was known in the lower regions of the house; but with marvellous power she suppressed every outward token of anger. 'Pardon, Mademoiselle,' she said in a sarcastic tone, and courtesying low; 'I was not aware that a *gouvernante* was so exalted a personage as I now learn that she is; but, *ma foi*, I must try and remember. Well, if it will not demean you too much, Mademoiselle, to accompany me, I'll take you to a room with a fire, where I shall impart to you Madame's wishes. I hope that their being brought to you by so humble a person as myself will not interfere with their being carried out; and then, with a mock politeness more galling than the most studied rudeness, she opened the door for Ruth, adding: 'I must be excused for taking the liberty of going before Mademoiselle, as otherwise, she would not know the way.'

Ruth silently followed to one of the lower rooms—a sufficiently comfortable apartment, with the agreeable adjunct of a brisk fire burning clearly and brightly in its polished grate.

'This,' continued Mrs Montserrat, in the same sneering manner, 'will be the future study and school-room of the *gouvernante* and her pupils. Madame desires that you will have the goodness, Mademoiselle, to be here every morning at eight o'clock, when the young ladies will meet you; and from that time until they retire for the night, they are to be under your charge; they are to walk out with you every day that the weather permits; their music-lessons are, when Madame is well enough, to be always given in her boudoir. As to their other business, Madame supposes that you will understand how to arrange that yourself; and she also says, that as I have had hitherto a great deal to do with these young ladies' (and here Mrs Montserrat's voice and manner became haughty and severe), 'I am still to have what control over them I wish.'

'I am glad,' replied Ruth, 'that you told me this, as I shall inquire from Mrs Sinclair the nature of that control, and how far it is to interfere with my authority over the children.'

'Indeed!' indignantly returned the other; 'you can ask, I suppose, what you like. I shall send the young ladies to you; and as she left the room, she gave Ruth the same malignant glance from under her eyes, which had thrilled through her so disagreeably the preceding evening. In two or three minutes, the little girls came. They were at first, as is natural with those of tender years, shy and reserved; but their young instructress soon broke down this barrier, for she had a peculiarly winning way with children. She succeeded more readily with Alice, the younger of the two. Gertrude, who was about a year older, had more of natural coldness, but yielded ultimately in a great degree to the gentle advances of her governess. A short trial elicited the fact, that for their years—ten and eleven—both the children were very backward in their learning. Ruth inquired who had taught them before.

'Oh, no one,' returned Gertrude; 'I mean, we had no governess like you. Mamma sometimes heard us our lessons; papa taught us when he was at home; but Marguerite, you know, she used almost always to hear us when she had time!—'

'Yes,' interrupted Alice; 'and Marguerite did not want you to come at all: she was angry about it: but uncle made aunt send for you.'

'Oh, but,' said Ruth laughing, 'why did Marguerite, as you call her, object to my coming? What did she know about me?'

'Oh, not you,' added Gertrude; 'but any governess at all. I heard mamma laughing at her, and saying she was jealous about any one coming.'

'I'm very glad that you have come, though,' said

Alice, looking up, with her soft eyes, into Ruth's face, and laying her hands on her lap. 'I don't like Marguerite.'

'Fie, Alice!' said Gertrude sharply; 'you shouldn't say that; she's very fond of us both, and I like her very much.'

'Gertrude is quite right,' said Ruth: 'we must not say Alice, that we don't like people.'

'But I do not like her,' repeated the child; 'and I can't tell a lie. Do you like her, Miss Morrison?'

Before Ruth could frame any reply to this embarrassing question, they were called to breakfast, a meal at which the governess and children sat down alone; and after it, the latter were sent for to Mrs Sinclair. In the spare hour that followed, Ruth happened by mistake to go back suddenly into the breakfast-room, supposing it was the one appropriated as the children's study, and found there Mrs Montserrat and Marks the butler in close, and apparently intimate converse; and as she caught her own name repeated, accompanied with laughter by both, she concluded that her little episode of the morning with the housekeeper was the theme of their amusement. 'Well, now, and if that isn't rich, Mrs M. Pride and Poverty, they say, hunt in couples,' was the response from Marks that reached her ear as she stood confused for a moment. Neither of them seemed much embarrassed at her unexpected entrance, they merely turned away; Marks regarding her with an impudent cynical stare as he passed, leaving the room. The butler himself was not prepossessing in appearance, being a heavy man, with a pale flabby face, small gray eyes, and a double chin that rested complacently on the folds of a white cravat. His manner, cringing and servile to his superiors, pompous and consequential to any whom he chose to patronise, made him peculiarly repulsive. Ruth could not help observing, as she met the two thus together, that there seemed to be an unusually close intimacy between them, but just then it gave her little concern. She did not at all regret what, on the impulse of the moment, she had said to Mrs Montserrat, as she perceived that, whatever inward feelings of dislike it might have originated or augmented, it secured all that she cared for—some outward manifestation of respect. For a fortnight or more little occurred to vary the monotonous routine of Ruth's daily course; the regular hours for instruction, the music-lessons—generally given in Mrs Sinclair's own room—continued each day; the weather admitted of but little outdoor recreation. The one bright phase of her life was the attachment that sprang up between her and her young charges, especially with Alice. Gertrude was harder to manage; more under the influence of Mrs Montserrat, who never failed to thwart the wishes of their instructress, when it was possible for her to do so. Ruth did not carry out her intention of inquiring into the nature of the authority which the housekeeper affirmed she was to retain, as she feared that such a step might be injurious to her own comfort; she felt pleased to think that she certainly did not seem to decline in Mrs Sinclair's estimation, since that lady became more kind and courteous; but this, Ruth remarked, was only in Mrs Montserrat's absence; whenever she was present, her mistress appeared as if she thought that the least friendliness shewn to the governess needed some apology to the housekeeper. The first break in the way of variety from the ordinary course was one morning about three weeks after Ruth's arrival, when her pupils joyously announced to her that 'Papa had come home,' for so both the little girls always called the captain.

'He came very late last night,' said Gertrude; 'and we have not seen him yet; but,' and the child's face brightened up, 'I know he'll soon send for us.' It was easy to see that the attachment between Captain Sinclair and his niece and daughter was of no ordinary stamp, and Ruth felt that it spoke well for

both parties; the more so, as his frequent absence must have weakened the bond of union between them. It was always with reluctance that he left his home, and with extreme satisfaction that he returned; but extensive agency business which he had undertaken, since, in delicate health, he had left the army, and settled in an old family place in Ireland, necessitated constant journeys; some property of his deceased brother's (who had left his affairs in extreme confusion), that he wished to improve for his orphan niece, Alice, also entailed on him much anxiety. Upon Captain Sinclair's entering the study, he was greeted by the children with rapturous demonstrations of affection. Ruth stood for a few moments apart, watching with pleasure the reciprocal feelings of delight that were manifested; and then he came forward, and won yet further her favourable opinion by the courteous, yet frank and friendly manner with which he welcomed her to Oaklands.

'I trust, Miss Morrison,' he said, 'that you will find your residence with us an agreeable one. I think I can see,' he continued, surveying the little girls attentively—'I think I can see improvement here already.'

Captain Sinclair was a plain man, tall, slight, and of middle age. In manners, he was perfectly a gentleman, with a uniform kindness, the result of natural amiability of disposition, that rendered him a general favourite; though, in his own house, there were two exceptions to this—his butler and housekeeper. Both were afraid of the keen, penetrating eye, that more than once, they feared, might have read an inward page they would rather have kept closed; while they felt, that if he detected aught astray he would be sure to act shortly and decisively. At breakfast, that morning, when both teacher and pupils joined the captain (Mrs Sinclair was often absent from the early meal, and on this day had a bad headache, from the excitement, she alleged, of her husband's return), he asked Ruth several questions about herself, and in a strain of so much genuine kindness as to elicit the warmest and happiest emotions from the governess; and at the close of the repast, when Gertrude and Alice departed, according to custom, to Mrs Sinclair, desiring Ruth to remain for a moment, he asked Ruth if she found herself quite comfortable since she came; adding, before she had time to answer: 'There is one person, Miss Morrison, in this household about whom I should wish to say a word to you; I mean the housekeeper, Mrs Montserrat. She's a woman whom I can't say I like; but' (and here he hesitated for a moment, as if he were half-ashamed to admit the fact) 'she has, there is no question about it, managed to acquire a very great, and, I conceive, unfortunate influence over my wife. True, that when first engaged in our service, she was extremely useful, and nursed Mrs Sinclair through a tedious and trying illness; and this naturally led to an attachment stronger than is usual between a servant and mistress. She is the widow of a sergeant, an excellent man, who had been under me, and I was particularly glad, at the time of his death, to serve her. I fancy,' continued Captain Sinclair, in a half-musing manner, 'that she was rather well born. She is of French extraction—from Montpellier, in Languedoc, I think, though she speaks English like one of ourselves; and there is some cloud or mystery over her antecedents that I have never yet been able to penetrate; at least so I conjecture from one or two dark and ominous hints thrown out by some comrades of her poor husband's; but I could make nothing of them, and Mrs Sinclair would never listen to the faintest whisper against her. I speak of her to you now, Miss Morrison, in confidence, chiefly for this reason, that I wish her to have as little as possible to do with our little girls; they have been too

long left to her control. She had a strange dislike to any governess being engaged, and, I am sorry to say, most provokingly induced Mrs Sinclair for a considerable time to object also. But now that you have come,' he added, turning smilingly to Ruth, 'I shall feel quite happy about the children.'

Ruth laughed, and answered that she did not think she was any favourite with the housekeeper, and that their intercourse was not likely to be very great.

'I hope,' returned Captain Sinclair energetically, 'that she has not dared to give you any annoyance.'

'Nothing to signify, indeed, sir,' replied Ruth.

'Because, Miss Morrison,' he added, 'if you have the least cause of complaint about her, or indeed about anything, be sure to let me know. Mrs Sinclair's health is so indifferent, that many things may escape her notice; but I should feel it to be a duty as well as a pleasure to promote in every way the comfort of the lady to whom we commit the important charge of our children's education, and Miss Morrison, I trust, will let me add, to protect, if necessary, to the utmost of my power, one whom the Almighty has seen fit to leave comparatively friendless in this trying world.'

There was a respectful tenderness in the tone with which the last words were spoken that went home to their listener's heart; and it was with moistened eyes and a tremulous voice that Ruth earnestly thanked her kind employer, and with considerably lightened spirits entered on the occupations of that day. With Ruth Morrison, it was sunshine at Oaklands while Captain Sinclair was at home; his quiet but determined hand kept down all unpleasantness. He frequently was present in the school-room during the hours of instruction; and the shyness that Ruth at first experienced was very soon dissipated by the genial and encouraging voice in which he remarked her success with her pupils. One source of uneasiness there remained, in her reflections on the distant lover to whom she had been affianced. By the rule imposed by herself, no correspondence was to take place between them; 'let us only pray for each other,' was her last injunction at their parting. Yet, strong as were the reasons for this arrangement, she could not but regret it. It would have been more than human nature, if she did not in her present circumstances yearn for a renewed assurance of that strong affection that had been the one earthly prop to her sinking spirit, in the day when the last storm of sorrow had all but swept her to the ground.

CHAPTER III.

Some months passed on; the dark winter days were over, and the fresh, balmy spring-weather brought with it brightness and hope. This was a period of much enjoyment to Ruth. Captain Sinclair had been longer at home than usual; his wife's health seemed to improve, and with it her temper; at all events, she was now generally kind to her governess, though Ruth sometimes thought that this was to be attributed to her husband's influence. Mrs Montserrat never held the same position when the captain was at home, and, consequently, she evidently hated him. Indeed, Ruth more than once suspected that the control which the housekeeper maintained over her mistress was often irksome to her; but, naturally of an indolent disposition, Mrs Sinclair was powerless, even if she desired it, to struggle against her; while very adroitly did Mrs Montserrat fall in with her failings, and with consummate skill and perseverance mend anew and coil afresh the thread that might on any occasion have been weakened or broken through. The housekeeper now seldom came in contact with Ruth at all; but the jealous soreness as regarded the children, and her lost power over them, especially with respect to Gertrude, rankled bitterly in the

woman's heart ; and circumstances that occurred just at this time brought it out more prominently. There were many beautiful walks about Oaklands ; but the one that was a favourite with Ruth and the children was a long avenue, which ran through the wood that gave the place its name, and skirted the lake before mentioned, and then, by a small wicket-gate, communicated with the road, forming a short-cut to the house for any one coming in that direction.

One fine April day, the governess and children had gone out for their accustomed exercise. Both Gertrude and Alice were but just recovering from bad colds ; and Mrs Sinclair had been particular in her directions that they were to keep to the walks, and not venture on grass that might be damp from the showers of the season. They had gone, as usual, along their favourite route, and had reached a turn where the broad walk left the shade of the trees, and ran between the lake and the grove. 'I declare,' said Gertrude, 'there's Marguerite coming from Common Cross.' 'I heard mamma giving her a message to take there. May I run to meet her, Miss Morrison ?'

Before Ruth could well reply, Gertrude was off, while Alice looked wistfully after her. As Mrs Montserrat came on, holding Gertrude by the hand, Ruth saw that she had given something to the child ; and as they drew nearer, the housekeeper, taking no notice of Ruth, beckoned Alice towards her, and was proceeding to fill the little girl's hand with comfits from a paper-bag, when Ruth gently interposed : 'Pardon me, Mrs Montserrat ; but these young ladies have not been well lately, and Mrs Sinclair would not wish them, I know, to eat sweetmeats.'

Ruth's remonstrance elicited no reply or attention of any kind, save that the housekeeper's arm trembled as she continued to pour out the *bonbons* into Alice's hand.

'Children, I desire that you will not eat these things without your mother's permission,' said Ruth, in a more determined tone.

Alice, ever ready to respond to the least intimation from her governess, let the comfits drop on the walk.

'There, you *petite bête*,' exclaimed Mrs Montserrat angrily, and pushing the child away from her ; 'go ; you'll always be a fool. Come with me, Gerty ; you're not such a little *stupid* !' and she seized the elder girl's hand, and turned from the walk towards a field, through which a pathway led more directly to the house.

'Stop, Gertrude !' exclaimed her governess, who was now excited and annoyed. 'I must beg, Mrs Montserrat, that you will leave the child with me : her mother has given positive orders that she is not to go on the grass, and I desire you not to take her from me.'

'You *desire*,' returned the housekeeper, in a voice that shook with anger, while her thin lips quivered and grew pale. 'And who are you, pray ? or who gave you authority over me, I'd like to know ? I took these children where I chose before your handsome face shone upon us here, and, *ma foi*, I'll take them still ;' and surveying Ruth with a look of ineffable scorn, she grasped Gertrude's hand so forcibly, that the child winced from the pressure, and swept by Ruth towards the field referred to. Ruth saw that there was no use in further remonstrance, and returned silent and irritated along the oak-walk towards the house ; Mrs Montserrat, still holding Gertrude's hand as in a vice, and almost dragging her after her, for the child was frightened at the altercation that had taken place, and was hanging back. 'Come on, do !' exclaimed the housekeeper, panting with indignation, and she strode over a high stile into the adjoining field, lifting Gertrude in her arms. On they went in silence, broken only by Mrs Montserrat's occasional French invectives, that betrayed the turbulent current of her thoughts. She was

walking rapidly—so rapidly that the little girl was obliged to trot beside her, and with her eyes bent down, when suddenly Gertrude stopped short, with an exclamation of alarm, that caused her companion to turn on her with a frown, and ask what ailed her.

'Look ! look !' said the terrified child, pointing to one end of the large field, the middle of which they had reached. A bull was coming on quickly towards them, pawing the ground, snorting, and shewing unmistakable symptoms of mischief.

'*Misericorde !*' exclaimed the woman, with a face that became white from fear. 'Quick, child, come this way ;' and dragging Gertrude on, she commenced a retreat in an opposite direction to that they had been taking. The effect of this course was to accelerate considerably the movements of the dangerous animal ; in fact, from a brisk trot he instantly broke into a canter.

'Run, child, run !' shrieked the housekeeper, rapidly disengaging her hand from Gertrude's, and concerned only for her own safety.

'Oh, don't leave me, Marguerite, don't leave me !' cried Gertrude ; but Mrs Montserrat, deaf to every consideration but one, flew towards that side of the enclosure that offered the speediest escape. Having succeeded in reaching and rapidly clambering over the boundary-wall of the field, she plunged into the grove, and, though perfectly safe, continued her course with undiminished speed, until she stood gasping and exhausted in her own room at Oaklands. Meanwhile, Gertrude remained for an instant stock-still, paralysed with fear, and then, with one wild shriek, ran as fast as she could towards the walk, where she had so unfortunately left her governess. Ruth and Alice had been slowly walking on by the lake, when the first note of alarm reached their ears. 'What is that ?' asked Alice.

'Oh, 'tis from the road,' responded Ruth, who was at the instant too chafed in spirit to pay much attention to anything ; but soon another sharper cry attracted their attention.

'Miss Morrison,' exclaimed Alice, 'that's Gerty, I am sure. I suppose that Marguerite is beating her.' The same thought flashed upon Ruth's mind too.

'Stay here, Alice,' she said quickly—'don't stir from this walk until I come back ;' and she moved hastily towards the field. Very soon the renewed screams of the child warned her that some greater danger than she had imagined was impending, and running with all her might, she crossed into the field, almost at the instant that Gertrude had turned, and was fleeing on, with the bull in full pursuit. Ruth at once foresaw that her own position would be one of extreme danger if she went on ; but without a single thought for herself, she rushed towards the child.

'O save me, Miss Morrison—save me !' were entreaties now mingled with the wilder cries of terror. A considerable distance still intervened between the little girl and her governess, while the bull was each instant drawing nearer to the former. An old stump of a tree just then tripped Gertrude in her flight, and after an ineffectual effort to recover herself, she fell headlong to the ground. All seemed lost for the ill-fated child, as the animal, tearing along, came up with her before she could attempt to rise ; when Ruth, struggling forward, in an agony raised a roar in imitation of his own, though her tongue was parched and her throat dry with the sickening sensation of fear. The bull was bending down to attack the almost senseless form before him, when this strange sound drew his attention ; he lifted up his head, tossing it furiously, and glared upon Ruth, as she undauntedly faced him. He stood for a second or two irresolute, when the governess quickly opened her parasol, and twirled it in his face. The animal retreated several paces at this unexpected onset, and Ruth called earnestly to Gertrude to get up and run

to the oak-walk to Alice, and that she would keep off the bull. The hope of deliverance aroused the poor child; she scrambled to her feet, calling out as she ran: 'O Miss Morrison, you'll be killed, you'll be killed!'

'Don't mind me, Gerty; run you as fast as you can.' And it would no doubt have fared but ill with Gertrude's heroic protector, as the terrible animal was recovering his self-possession, and preparing for a fresh assault, when Captain Sinclair, accompanied by a workman who was with him in the wood, attracted by the cries and commotion, appeared most opportunely upon the scene, and not a moment too soon, extricated Ruth from certain destruction. The whole party returned to the house weary and exhausted after the alarm and excitement.

Mrs Montserrat, the cause of the entire misadventure, waited in considerable uneasiness until she ascertained that all were safe, when she quickly repaired to Mrs Sinclair, and tried to make good her own story, and to exculpate herself from her share in the transaction. She succeeded to a certain extent, for a time, as Gertrude, who could perhaps alone have explained the matter fully, was for some days confined to bed, threatened with fever, from the shock she had sustained. Her father, however, afterwards elicited the full account from her in Mrs Sinclair's room, and Ruth and Mrs Montserrat were both present by his command. When all was disclosed, exactly as it had occurred, Captain Sinclair, in the sternest manner, told the housekeeper what his opinion of her conduct was, and that the slightest interference for the future with Miss Morrison would insure her dismissal from Oaklands. 'And I hope,' he continued, turning to his child, 'that you, Gertrude, will never forget that Miss Morrison saved you from a most shocking death, at the peril of her own life: I, as your father, trust that I never shall.' And the voice in which he spoke was one of deep emotion, as he shook Ruth warmly by the hand.

Whether Mrs Sinclair fully participated in her husband's gratitude, it was hard to know; she thanked Ruth, it is true, but in feeble terms compared with what the circumstances demanded; and she certainly did not seem in the least altered towards her housekeeper, notwithstanding the selfish pusillanimity that she had displayed. Her husband did not, however, let the matter rest in words, but some days after presented Ruth with a beautiful gold watch and chain, the gift, he said, of himself and his wife, a small token of their esteem and regard; while on the back was engraved, under Ruth's name, their joint initials. Ruth, however, while she thanked both alike, was satisfied that Mrs Sinclair was passive in the bestowal of this handsome present.

Two results followed from the day's events: one, most gratifying to her governess, that the link between her and Gertrude—who had hitherto been always more attracted to Mrs Montserrat—became from that time stronger, as the child was fully conscious of the difference in the way in which each had acted in the hour of danger; the second, was a yet deeper hostility and dislike in the mind of the housekeeper towards her. Not many days subsequent to the encounter with the bull, Ruth was sitting on a seat in the verandah. The day was warm, and she had been reading; Captain and Mrs Sinclair were both out, and her pupils were at work in a garden of their own at the other end of the building. Ruth had nearly fallen asleep over her book, when she was roused by voices close to her; the window of the dining-room that looked into the verandah was open, and the speakers were in that room. She did not at first, in the dreamy state that she was in, recognise who they were, or what they were saying, but her attention was soon arrested by detecting Mrs Montserrat's tone. 'Now, Joshua,' were the first words she caught, 'I can't, nor won't

stand this much longer. Will you soon be able to manage what we were settling about?'

'Patience, patience, Mrs M.' returned the butler; 'things must take their course for a little. I'm on the watch—believe me, I'm on the watch. Rome, you know, wasn't built in a day.'

'Tut, nonsense, man,' replied the other, speaking angrily; 'you don't know the torture I'm in. That girl—perdition to her!' and she hissed the words through her shut teeth—'foils me at every turn. 'Tis as much as I can do to hold my own with my idiot of a mistress! She's quite changed to me of late; and there's Gertrude, that I could do anything with, and that was my strong point with the mother—that one, since the unfortunate business of the bull, is turned against me. I'll not rest, I swear, until I have revenge.'

'By Jove, Mrs M.!' exclaimed the butler with a low laugh, 'you gave leg-bail with a vengeance when the bull came down upon you.'

'Tush, fool! who'd stand to be gored, I'd like to know, for the sake of a puling child? But, Joshua,' she added, more softly, laying her hand upon his arm, 'will you soon be able to do what you said?'

'Hush, Mrs M.—hush, for God's sake; walls have ears;' and that single expression startled Ruth into the recollection that she was occupying the position of an eaves-dropper.

She rose quickly from her seat. 'They shall see me, at any rate,' she thought; and walking forward, she passed through the open window into the dining-room. Mrs Montserrat was standing with her back to Ruth as she entered; the butler was facing her; a decanter of wine was open on the sideboard; and the man had a tumbler half-full of sherry in his hand. The look of consternation on the face of Marks made the housekeeper turn round with a start. Seeing Ruth coming in with her bonnet on, and a book in her hand, it never for an instant occurred to her that she might have been a listener to any of their conversation; her only anxiety seemed to be to cover the butler's retreat, and to turn Ruth's attention from the wine he was drinking. With the self-possession this woman could, in general, command, and with a hypocritical smile playing round her thin lips, she moved forward between Ruth and Marks.

'I'm just preparing medicine for Madame. It is a warm day; will Mademoiselle try a glass of wine?'

'No, thank you,' replied Ruth with marked coldness, as she passed from the room through the door at which Marks had just rapidly vanished. 'What can these creatures be plotting?' thought Ruth. 'Nothing good, I am sure. For myself, I defy that woman's malice. Ought I,' she continued in her own mind, 'to speak about the wine?' She was a little perplexed as to what she had better do; but had determined on telling Captain or Mrs Sinclair; when that same evening, while she was with the little girls and their mother in the boudoir, the housekeeper came in, and in the course of conversation, turning to her mistress with a laugh, she exclaimed: 'Only think, Madame, what I did to that *bête* Marks to-day: I was making your bitters, and I gave him some of the dregs, pretending that it was wine. Oh, if you but saw him when he gulped it down! *Mon Dieu!* the face of him! It was that time, Mademoiselle, you remember, when you came in, and that he ran off in such a hurry.'

The children laughed, and Mrs Sinclair said she hoped that she had not wasted much of her medicine. Mrs Montserrat cast a stealthy look of triumph at Ruth, which implied: 'I have foiled you now, if you intended mischief.' She knew well that she had not deceived the governess, but she guarded thus skilfully against any complaint that might be prejudicial to herself. Ruth often pondered over the disjointed fragments of conversation that she had overheard, but could make nothing of them. She determined

to be on the alert, and to endeavour to detect or subvert whatever machinations her foes might have in view; but some months passed on, and as nothing transpired again to arouse suspicion, the circumstance almost faded from her recollection.

A STERN CHASE.

THE *Constance* was the fastest ship in the trade, and Captain W. was justly proud of her. She was a beautiful model of a clipper—low and long with tall masts—and but for her somewhat heavy spars, might have passed for a ship-rigged yacht.

Like the fairest among womankind, she had her detractors, but they were compelled by the force of common opinion, to utter their reproaches in an under-growl. Some thought her too long for her tonnage; some, too heavily sparr'd; others, who could not point out special defects, contented themselves with gloomy, vague dispraise, such as that they should not like to be in her in a stiff gale; that insurance offices ought to be careful about insuring the lives of her officers; and that they always looked on Captain W. as a man who held his life in his hand. I was considered a bold man by these to take passage in her from Barbadoes to London.

Among the detractors, who would have given their long ears to command her, was the captain of the *Saucy Jack*, a fast-sailing brig belonging to other owners. He, too, was loading for London, and was to be sent off as quickly as possible, in order to get the first cargo of new sugar into the English market. So forward was his fadig, and so urgent were his charterers, that it was clear he would be away long before any other ship could get loaded; and there were few in Bridgetown who did not think he would carry out the commission given to him.

One of the few was Captain W. of the *Constance*. His ship had been built for the very purpose of carrying in the first of the sugars; she had for several years carried them in, and why she should not do so this year it was out of his head to conjecture. But the *Saucy Jack* was nearly laden, the *Constance* wanted two hundred hogsheads to complete her, and sugar was coming in from the country but slowly. No matter for that, the captain scorned the notion of being in second, though he kept his own counsel.

In due course the *Saucy Jack* was ready for sea, got her clearance, and started for England. The day before she sailed, L., her captain, met W. on the cane-ware-wharf, and stopped to say good-bye.

'We're off to-night,' said L., 'and have got a good start of you; but, of course, you'll be in before us.'

W., who fancied he detected a hint of a sneer in this speech, felt the honour of the *Constance* was concerned, and at once replied: 'Of course we shall.'

'A new hat you will not,' rejoined L.

'Done!' added W., and the two salts parted.

The *Saucy Jack* left Carlisle Bay that night, and by next morning was gone clean out of sight.

Slowly came the sugar into the town, and day after day was consumed in getting it on board. It was ten days after the sailing of the *Saucy Jack* before the *Constance* was ready for sea. On the afternoon of 25th February I went on board, having been told by W. that we should start the same night. But the wind was light and adverse, so we lay with our anchors still down, waiting for what the morning might bring us.

While I sat on deck that evening, enjoying the sweet softness of the night air after the great heat of the day, watching the lights which flitted about on the ships in port, and thinking of those far away whom I hoped soon to see, I was aware of a long, three-masted steamer standing out of the bay. Had

not the vacant berth told me who she was, the stars and broad stripes flying at her peak would have informed me. She was the Confederate States' cruiser *Florida*, which had been with us for two days, and about which the American consul had been 'chaffed' very considerably. A few days before coming into Bridgetown she had destroyed the *Jacob Bell*, one of the richest of her prizes; and away she went now, crammed up to her beams with coal, and heavy with as hearty wishes from many as neutrals might give.

No signs of our moving that night; so I turned in early, to be awakened at 5.30 next morning by a great stamping of feet, shouting, ordering, straining of ropes and creaking of cables, the meaning of which I found when I went on deck to be, that the *Constance* was under-way. In five minutes more the long clewed-up sails were fluttering in the morning wind; in another minute, the sheets were all well home, and, under the pressure of main and foresails, top-sails, top-gallant sails, spankers, jibs, and foretop-mast stay-sail, the *Constance* rushed through the water like a high-mettled charger suddenly let loose.

'Set the royals,' shouted the captain, and set they were. On bounded the ship, dashing the foam off her bows, and sending it high over her forecastle, and down in a stream along the main-deck to the after-scuppers. Away we went in this style for a couple of hours, bowing along with a fine breeze on the quarter, till, arriving off the north point of the island, we met a whole gale of wind and a very rough sea.

In ten minutes our royals and top-gallant sails were furled, and double reefs taken in the top-sails, just enough head-sail being kept as would make the ship steady.

How she pitched! nose under, as it sometimes seemed, and then rose again, like a coy maiden, disdainful of the rough salute of old Father Neptune. A thousand great caverns of water, with seething surge tumbling about them, yawned all about us—the sun making as many crowns of rainbows as there were fountains of spray. Hungry waves of huge size kept rushing at the ship, which dodged them as she had been a thing of life, and let them over-roll themselves in surge across her wake. They put me in mind of the fiends attacking Christian in his walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Up they came, raging with force enough to stave in our side, foaming and gnashing at us; and, just in the act to strike, were hurled back by some invisible hand, to spend themselves with their own exertions. Some of them hit the ship, making her quiver like a creature in pain; but she breasted them bravely; and, rising to meet them, covered the water with foam.

By 2.30 P.M. on the following day, the gale had much abated.

'A sail on the port-bow, sir!' said the officer of the watch; and down I was sent for the captain's 'binocular' to make her out.

The *Simeon Hardy*, for a sovereign, said W., 'though she left twelve hours before us,' and presently, sure enough, up went the *Simeon Hardy's* signal-flags to the peak. We overhauled her hand over hand. By 4.30, we had passed her, and at sunset we could see her, hull down, astern to leeward.

We had a splendid run, strong winds and fair, till 7th March; got a slant in lat. 27 N., instead of having to go to Bermuda for it, or worse still, to woo a rough nor'-wester on the banks of Newfoundland. Two days of doldrums were followed by a return of our friendly wind, and on we sped again on a circle inside the great circle tract. We overtook some vessels, and met a few of the outward-bound, but saw nothing of the *Saucy Jack*.

'Ten days' start is a bit too much,' said W. one day, in a desponding tone, though I have reason now for thinking he dissembled.

'It is a good deal,' said I; 'but'—
'Oh, I don't despair!' replied W.

'Why should you?' rejoined I, in the non-resisting spirit of Mrs Shandy when listening to her husband's wisdom on the subject of Tristram's breeches.

We both rejected, as unworthy of credit, the frequent assertions of the second officer, that we had passed the *Saucy Jack* in the night; because, if all his statements were true, there must have been many more *Saucy Jacks* than we knew to be afloat. Gradually the subject dropped; and it was not until we neared the chops of the Channel, that any one thought of looking out for the brig. We had made a clipping passage—twenty-two days to the Lizard from Barbadoes; and as we knew it was not uncommon to be twice that time over it, we considered ourselves warranted in supposing the *Saucy Jack* to be not far off. However, we searched vessel after vessel as we came up to them, in vain—the *Saucy Jack* was not among them.

On the morning in which we were off the Lizard, W. came on deck about 7 A.M. to where I was standing by the mizzen, with the mate, who had had the last watch. The wind had been blowing half a gale since the second half of the middle-watch; and the mate had taken in the royals, top-gallants and courses, and two reefs in the top-sails, in order, as he said, to ease the ship; the result being, however, that she was now going only six knots, with a following sea running nearly as fast. The captain gave one look aloft, said something to the mate which I would rather not repeat; and, in great wrath at the insult offered to his ship, had the reefs shaken out of the top-sails, the top-gallant sails and royals set, with the two jibs and foretop-mast stay-sail.

'Whew! how she felt it! Plunge, plunge she went, surrounded by foam, and trembling under the weight of her canvas, wet as might be, to the foot of the main-mast, and getting her lee-quarter rails washed at every lurch.

Great, indeed, was my surprise when I heard the indignant captain order the foretop-mast stay-sail boom to be run out, and the sail to be set. The boom was run out, and the sail was set; but with a result not encouraging to the spread of more canvas, for in five minutes the boom had snapped in twain, and the sail itself cleared out on its own account. Presently came the officer of the watch with 'The port main-royal sheet's gone, sir!'

'Send up a light hand, and bend on another,' was the answer.

Then the fore-stay sail sheet gave way, and was followed by the splitting of the flying-jib, five feet up. Sail, however, was not reduced, and away went the *Constance* at over eleven knots an hour, cleaving the water like a knife.

By 5.30 that evening, we had passed Plymouth, and were abreast of the Bolt Tail and Bolt Head. By 6.20, we were abreast of the Start; and at 11 p.m., off Portland.

While I was dressing next morning (by which time we were off St Catherine's, Isle of Wight), one of the men came down to the door of the cabin, and with a broad grin of humour on his face, reported: 'The brig, sir, on the starboard-hawse.'

Up ran W. in a state that made it a comfort to think we had no ladies on board; and, sure enough, there on the starboard bow, which was rapidly becoming the starboard quarter, lay the long-sought *Saucy Jack*, with her canvas-wings vainly trying to keep the lead she had had so long.

'What is she saying?' I asked, as W. took a long look through his glass at the string of flags fluttering at her gaff.

'Will you report us at Lloyd's?' answered W., as he made out the numbers one after the other.

'O yes, we'll do that for you,' said W.; 'answer the signals; and by the time our flags were down

again, the *Saucy Jack* was in the wash of our wake.

A merry breakfast-party there was in the cabin that morning. I was inclined to be extravagantly happy at seeing once more the white cliffs of Old England, and could therefore enter fully into the joy of W.

'That's a ten-pound note into my pocket, at the least,' said W. 'How pleased the house will be! Well done, *Constance*, lass! Of course, she could beat that thing! with similar hilarious expressions about a fact which he would have sternly chidden me for hinting at, if we had not actually achieved it.

On we went, past Brighton and the seven cliffs of Beachy Head; stood out seven miles to the eastward to clear the Horse Shoal, and then in again by Hastings, Fairleigh, Rye, and Dungeness.

'Where you for, sir?' shouted a voice that seemed to speak from the air, but which really came from a fine Antwerp pilot-boat a little distance off.

'London!' shouted the captain; and with a 'God-speed you!' the Antwerpers sailed on.

In the course of another hour an English pilot-cutter bore down upon us; our main-yard was thrown aback, and the cutter's boat boarded us. A little man, with sharp black eyes, curly hair, short legs, and a long body, stepped on deck, and bowing to the captain, inquired our destination, port of departure, tonnage, and draught of water. Being satisfied on these points, he bowed again, shook hands, and announced that he was our pilot to Gravesend.

'And a precious fool, too,' said W. in an aside to me, as if the man's appearance gave his critic some presentiment of evil.

The cutter went off; we made fresh sail, and flew forward towards the coast of Kent. This was about 2 P.M. on Saturday.

'Now, pilot,' said W., 'you must put us up quick. I must be in London to-morrow morning, and there's a fast brig astern that I don't want to overhaul us.'

'No fear of that, sir! we'll do all we can; but we must, of course, make the safety of the ship our first consideration.'

The pilot was a man whose presence did not inspire admiration, and who did his best by his talk to lessen whatever of favourable impression he might have made upon us; but we had no hint of what he was actually capable of doing. By 5 P.M. we were off Dover; the wind fell very light, and there was but half an hour more of the tide to help us. W. was walking the quarter-deck with me, and seeing this, said: 'Depend on it, he'll go no further to-night. Rather than lie-to, and wait for the night wind to carry us into the Downs, whereby he'd get but a half-night's sleep, he'll let go the anchor in these roads. I believe he'd do anything.' And so saying, W., who had been up most of the last two nights, went below.

'Of course we shall get into the Downs to-night, pilot?' I said, with strong misgivings that we should not.

'Well, sir, I should like to get there; but the safety of the ship must be my first consideration.'

This was the fiftieth repetition of this fact known to all of us; and I had learned, even on our short acquaintance, to know that it was the shield under which the pilot always did some lazy thing. Within half an hour of W. going below, the cable was running through the hawse-pipe, and the good ship *Constance* had settled to her berth.

There was a want of freedom about the conversation in the cabin that night. The captain spoke only to me, and through me at the pilot; while the pilot tried to make things pleasant by uttering a number of fatuous sentiments, to which, after a little time, the chief mate alone responded. When bedtime came, it was found that the pilot's great gift was snoring. He filled the cabin with the horrid sound, intermitting it but once during the whole night when he was 'roused out' to swing the ship at her anchor.

Next morning was a lovely one, warm as summer, but without a breath of wind. We did not get under-way till 10 A.M., and then it was only to creep ten yards forwards and nine back, with all the sails flapping to destruction against the masts.

'Rely on it, that brig's in the Downs,' said W., the first thing after coming on deck; '*she* didn't anchor.'

This was delivered in an alto tone not three feet away from the pilot, who turned round to deny the statement as describing an impossibility.

A Deal boat boarded us. 'Any letters of messages for the shore, captain? Want to telegraph? Brought a bundle of papers for you, sir. Would you like a bit of fine fresh beef this morning?'

'Anything passed into the Downs from Barbadoes?' said W.

'No, sir, I don't think—O yes, by the by, a brig east anchor there at four o'clock this morning.'

'I thought as much,' said W., with a glare at the pilot, who was about to repeat his statement about the safety of the ship, when W. cut him short by walking off, muttering something about taking the ship up himself.

A breeze sprung up about 1 P.M., and away we went before it, through the Downs, past Ramsgate, and round the Foreland, but without catching sight of the *Saucy Jack*. We were getting to despair of seeing her again till we lay side by side in the London Docks, when, at 6 P.M., close to the Girdler, we again came up with her, and this time within speaking distance.

'I've won the hat,' shouted W.

'We were in the Downs first,' came across the water in reply.

We once more took the lead. Having got it, we made sure of keeping it. A tug was engaged to tow us up the river, and by her aid we cast anchor at Gravesend at two in the morning, one tide ahead of the *Saucy Jack*.

I have not heard how the captains settled their bet.

UNCOMMON DINNERS.

THOSE who have been much in the habit of dining-out, have doubtless often sighed at the great want of originality in connection with the viands supplied to them by their English hosts. Beef or mutton, with fowls or ducks, form almost always the backbone of the feast, whilst the variations occur only in the side-dishes and dessert. To have dined on various substances of an entirely different character, is at least novel, if not interesting; and we therefore purpose relating our own experience in connection with various dinners of a class anything but conventional.

It was with no little pride, we well remember, that we succeeded in catching and hauling on board ship our first young shark, which was not larger than an average-sized salmon. We had been becalmed during some days, about two degrees south of the line, and were vastly in want of excitement, so that to hook a shark was a stirring event. The little creature leaped about on the deck in a most frantic manner, and exhibited an immensity of muscular power, perfectly astounding in a fish. On account of its juvenile age, it was generally admitted that the shark had not as yet feasted on human kind, and therefore we might venture to try how it would taste. A portion having been cut off the creature, it was boiled, and served up like cod-fish. Certainly, we cannot recommend plain-boiled shark to any epicure; it tasted rather fishy, but, otherwise, just as boiled string might taste, and shark would henceforth have been discarded, had not a black man on board cooked a portion after his own peculiar receipt, which was as follows: A portion of the shark was parboiled; it was then worked in the hands, or stirred in a pan, with bread-crumbs; about a pound of the shark's liver

was then taken and boiled with the previous composition, and the shark was then really palatable, and not very unlike what our own cooks call 'twice laid.'

During upwards of eight hours, we had ridden over an undulating plain beneath the burning rays of an African sun, when we at length discovered the rough-and-ready house of a Dutch boer. Formerly, in South Africa, it was the custom to ride up to a house that thus stood alone, and to be immediately welcomed by the owner, whom we had never seen before, and probably would never see again. Such was the case in the present instance, and we were immediately requested to dismount, off saddle, and *in com* to eat. 'Dar is nix,' said our host, 'but eland beef and zee cow pork; but the eland is young, and the Zee cow fat.' To dine on a hippopotamus's ribs and an eland steak was certainly novel, and we were in such a state of hunger that we were not disposed to be critical. The very good and savoury odour that arose as we entered the Dutchman's house, induced us to believe that both the articles mentioned were not to be despised. We selected as a commencement a portion of the eland steak, and this without doubt was excellent; it was tender, juicy, and with a sort of venison-flavour; and we at once decided that it would be a most popular dish in England were the eland introduced, as it might be, in sufficient numbers to be killed and sold as food. It having been our fate at a future period to live entirely on eland's flesh during a fortnight, we can affirm that, even with the rough cooking of the bivouac, and the absence of flavour-giving condiments, still eland beef or venison is admirable eating. And now for a slice of hippopotamus. Hippo is usually boiled, and then tastes like a mean proportion between boiled beef and boiled pork. It would be very probable that a person might eat a piece of hippopotamus, and fail to discover that it was not a slice from a prize ox. The hippopotamus seems to possess a contented mind, and accumulates fat rapidly, it being a very unusual thing to find one of these creatures thin, or even deficient in plumpness.

'The *Bas* has sent you some *kameel*'s flesh,' said a wizened Hottentot, as he presented himself at our door, with a basket on his arm. Some *kameel*'s flesh was certainly a novelty; and one or two friends were immediately invited to dinner, 'cameleopard' being in the bill of fare. Unfortunately, this cameleopard's flesh had been salted, and partially dried in the sun, so that its full, rich flavour was in a great measure lost; but yet we tasted enough to discover that camel venison is very good, and our future experience fully proved this conclusion to be correct—the cameleopard being, especially when young, the best eating of all the wild animals of South Africa. To those who delight in marrow-bones the camel affords an ample feast, and the supply is more plentiful than it is from the bones of an ox. The cameleopard is a very shy animal, and is not found in abundance in any part of Africa, so that we fear that those who taste the flesh will ever remain in the minority, for the climate of England is not suited to the habits of the animal, and therefore it is not likely to be found in England, except in our menageries.

It was whilst rambling up the coast between Natal and the Tugela that we first attempted to eat another description of food, not usually found upon English dinner-tables. We had been hospitably received at the house of an English settler, near which was a Kaffir kraal, where his servants resided, these servants being runaway Zulus. A great noise was going on in the huts of this kraal, singing and shouting in abundance, whilst the smoke that forced its way through the thatched roof indicated that cooking was going on inside. We at once decided upon paying a visit to this kraal, especially when our host informed us that the gay and festive scene was caused

in consequence of a young elephant being killed by him on the previous day, which was now being rapidly disposed of by the Kaffirs. There was certainly great novelty in dining in a Kaffir hut upon elephant, so we decided upon inviting ourselves to dinner with the boisterous black gentlemen, whose gaiety had first attracted our attention. It was a wild and savage-looking scene. Inside a circular, beehive-shaped hut, about fifteen feet in diameter, were assembled some five-and-twenty Kaffirs, men, women, and children. They were seated in a circle, watching intently two huge earthen vessels, in which were masses of meat—elephant's meat—boiling and stewing. A wood fire glowed on the floor of the hut, and kept the pots boiling. This, I was informed, was the third lot of meat that had been eaten that day by the party. It certainly was too close and uninviting to enter the hut, but we determined to taste elephant; so we sent for a plate, and knife and fork, and waited outside whilst the cooking proceeded—a little salt and some bread being provided by our worthy host; the Kaffirs utterly scorn these additions, preferring the flesh *au naturel*. At length, the meat was pronounced 'done' by an old Kaffir man, who superintended the cooking, and we were offered a piece of meat of about two pounds' weight. Declining the whole of this, we selected a slice of about one-fourth the size, which we believed would be sufficient for a trial. We could not fail to perceive that our knife was marvellously blunt, as we endeavoured to cut the steak; the prongs of the fork seemed round instead of pointed. Our teeth, alas! had lost their edge; and after diligently endeavouring to bite the piece of meat that was in our mouth, we were compelled to give it up as a bad job; we could make no impression on it, even after some minutes' munching. Future trials of the same kind of animal induces us to assert that four-hundred-years' old elephant is not so good as four-years' old mutton, and we doubt whether elephant is even likely to become a popular dish. It seems strange that two animals whose food is so similar as is that of the elephant and hippopotamus, and whose size is equally unwieldy, should yet be so dissimilar in regard to toughness—the former being nearly uneatable, the latter very presentable food. Whilst referring to tough and unpalatable food, we must not forget the zebra, and wilde beast, or gnu, as it is also called; both these animals are eaten, but they are tough and coarse. A young zebra, however, about half grown, is not to be despised, and tastes like veal, but with less juiciness. We have seen Hottentots who preferred zebra to beef, when they had a choice of either. Wilde beast, however, has a rank flavour about it that prevents any person eating it from choice; but in the desert, it sometimes happens that it is wilde beast or nothing.

The toughest of all tough things that we ever ventured to insert our teeth into, and which, by comparison, would induce us to believe that elephant itself was tender, was a portion of a cock-ostrich. Leather itself, or wire, might possibly be masticated by a Kaffir; but this strong-toothed child of the wilderness laughed and shook his head when a portion of ostrich was offered him for a meal. Sometimes the most curious-looking creatures, and those which we should scarcely imagine were eatable, turn out to be very delicate and palatable. Such is the case with the porcupine. Divest him of his quills, and he is not a very large animal, but may be roasted whole, or cut up and put into a pie. In either case, the flavour is not unlike that of a hare. Its half-brother, the hedgehog, is said to be very delicate, but of this we have had no proof, never having as yet tasted our English version of the porcupine. We can easily imagine, however, that it would be very well worth eating, especially if we possessed such appetites as gipsies, who, it is said, feast joyfully upon it. We have been

fortunate enough to taste the canvas-back duck of North America, with its rich flavour of wild celery. The wild guinea-fowl and pouw of Africa have also frequently been upon our dinner-table; but, for delicacy and sweetness, we must pronounce the coran or smaller bustard of Africa the best of feathered game. The large bustard is also excellent eating; it is not dissimilar to a turkey.

A very curious dish, of which we once partook, is locusta. These, it is said, were favourite food with the ancients, but we certainly do not consider them very excellent. For us, they were fried with a little butter, and were not unlike whitebait. The guana, or large lizard, is another creature admirably suitable for food, and in some parts of South America is much and deservedly prized. We have, however, seen Kaffirs almost dying from starvation, because they could not procure either beef or corn, and who would yet refuse to taste lizards' flesh, the same people not hesitating to devour ravenously the half-cooked paunch of an ox.

There are few things about which people are more unreasonably fanciful than about eating. Children and grown-up people, savages and civilised men, have alike their strong prejudices. We have often seen savages feeding on flesh which we would scarcely have offered to a dog, and have been laughed at by them when they observed our disgust; whilst we have seen these same men look upon us with almost a feeling of horror, while we made our lunch off oysters, a description of food which they could not be persuaded to taste. There are some people who cannot endure to see crabs, lobsters, or shellfish of any kind eaten. Others, again, may look upon us as little better than cannibals, to have eaten many of those things about which we have here written. But much of this is, as we before remarked, mere fancy, and unreasonable too. Perhaps there are few creatures more dirty in their habits and food than pigs, and yet English men and women are great lovers of ham and bacon. The horse, again, is one of the cleanest of feeders, and yet we would venture to state that were a ham eater to be asked to take a slice of roast horse, he would, in most instances, reject it with disgust. The person, however, who, either from curiosity or necessity, is compelled to feed on other than beef and mutton, will find that outside of these two conventional items there are many delicate and delicious dishes to be procured; and that with moderate care, starvation, even in the desert, is a very unlikely contingency to one who knows how much that is usually despised is really very good eating.

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